



# IDAHO

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Idaho School Safety and Security Stakeholder Group Meeting Summary

Tuesday February 12, 2013 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

### Present:

Brian Armes, Bonneville S.D.	Guy Bliesner, Bonneville S.D.	Larry Callicutt, SDE Investigative Services
Justin Dusseau, Ada County Sheriff	Susan Fletcher, ISBA / American Falls S.D.	Samuel Hulse, Bonneville County Sheriff's Office
Scott Johnson, Ada County Sheriff / Idaho Sheriff's Association	Vicki Johnson, Blackfoot S.D.	Steve Keys, Division of Building Safety
Lisa Kramer, SDE	Matt McCarter, SDE	Mike Munger, Boise S.D.
Steve Myer, Boise Police	Gaylen Smyer, Cassia S.D.	Mark Stephensen, Bureau of Homeland Security
Steve Steiner, Bureau of Homeland Security	George Stevens, Boise Police	McRae Trenton (intern for Rep. Horman)
Todd Zucker, Weiser S.D.	Rep. Wendy Horman, House Education Committee	Doreen Hayes, SDE Administrative Assistant

### Stakeholder group mission:

1. Identify the critical infrastructure, resources and action steps (statewide plan) to create a culture of readiness to prevent and respond to crises in every school community in Idaho.
2. Build capacity for local jurisdictions to effectively prevent and respond to their unique crises situations.
3. Every student, parent and staff member feels safe in Idaho schools.

### Core concern:

Available data indicates Idaho schools, as a whole, are not prepared to effectively prevent and respond to crises situations. Lack of uniformity and interoperability of existing plans expose staff and students to risks.

### Critical components for a statewide plan for school safety:

- A common threat assessment is administered statewide, which includes physical structure, equipment, policy, standard operating procedures, school climate and culture. The assessment includes a rating system and is conducted with assistance with trained personnel (external to the school / district) and will include district / school staff and local first responders / emergency management representatives. Threat assessment results are reported to the State Department of Education on an annual based and are exempt from public records requests.
- Individualized safety plans are created by districts / schools based upon the results of the common threat assessment, which empowers local jurisdictions to focus time and resources on data-driven priorities. Safety plans are reported to the State Department of Education on an annual based and are exempt from public records requests.
- All safety / emergency operations plans are NIMS / ICS compliant.
- Communication systems that connect every classroom and building directly to first responders are in place

- Existing systems and resources are leveraged for efficiency and effectiveness such as:
  1. Safety plans are incorporated into Bureau of Homeland Security's THYRA framework for statewide emergency operations plan compatibility
  2. Connecting schools to Bureau of Homeland Security communication network for county emergency operations centers
  3. Exploring lower liability insurance rates for districts adhering to Idaho common core safety standards
  4. New school building construction incorporates critical security measures (single point access, magnetic strip door locking capabilities, classroom communications system, etc...)
  5. Local first responders are involved in threat assessment administration, safety planning, training and exercises
- Enact a statewide awareness campaign which engages parents and stakeholders in process and ownership
- Clear and measurable goals, including establishing a statewide baseline of prevention programs, plans and equipment in place (Idaho common core safety standards).
- A statewide training program is in place which provides ongoing, hands on support informed by best practice and research including:
  - I. Equipping teachers to make critical decisions before first responders arrive.
  - II. Train students as well as staff- run, fight, hide / Alice model.
  - III. Establish inter-rater reliability in the administration of the common threat assessment

**Capacity and sustainability requirements to establish and maintain Idaho's statewide school safety plan (Texas Center for School Safety model):**

- Entity / individuals established (1-3 FTE and operating budget) solely focused on school safety and security

*Decision point- housed in SDE? Independent entity? Governor's office? 501c3 (enables capturing grants and donations)? Institution of higher education? Other options?*

- Structure of organization must withstand changing administrations
- Governed by an appointed board with decision-making authority

*Decision point- makeup of the board and by who are they appointed?*

- Funded through a dedicated line item

**Core functions / responsibilities of the Idaho School Safety organization include:**

- i. Accountable for the implementation and monitoring of Idaho's school safety plan
- ii. Accommodate the requirements of law enforcement and the needs of schools
- iii. Serves as the single point of contact for school safety and security in Idaho
- iv. Leverage existing expertise and infrastructure to continuously strengthen school safety and security in Idaho
- v. Establish Idaho's common threat assessment tool
- vi. Oversee the recruitment, training and assigning of specialists to lead the implementation of the common threat assessment in schools throughout the state
- vii. Collect, compile and analyze threat assessment results (in a secure manner exempt from public records requests)
- viii. Report statewide aggregate results of threat assessments on an annual basis to the Legislature, State Board of Education, State Department of Education and other stakeholders
- ix. Establish Idaho common core school safety standards
- x. Address redundancies / deficiencies in Idaho statute and IDAPA rule related to school safety

- xi. Assist districts in crafting and implementing safety plans based upon the results of threat assessment and the Idaho common core school safety standards
- xii. Deliver a training program based on regional delivery and individualized support
- xiii. Provide guidance and technical assistance to schools as needed
- xiv. Research and compile best practices, resources, standard operating procedures, policy and materials- serve as the statewide repository of expertise regarding school safety and security
- xv. Organize and host community forums, regional summits and statewide events focused on school safety and security
- xvi. Create and implement a statewide public awareness campaign designed to increase local ownership and action around school safety
- xvii. Establish mechanisms to engage local leaders in planning and delivery- seek out and establish local support for statewide measures
- xviii. Integrate existing plans, equipment and unique safety measures in place among schools when developing improvements

#### **Risks**

- I. Perception of unfunded mandate (threat assessment and training requirements, adherence to Idaho common core safety standards, limited personnel dedicated to the issue, lack of resources to address identified gaps- safety equipment, retrofitting, etc...)
- II. Limited ability to meet the requirements of school safety requirements
- III. Idaho common safety standards meeting the local needs of schools- no local ownership / buy in
- IV. Lack of political will to dedicate ongoing resources to school safety
- V. Complacency diminishes urgency / attention to school safety through time

**Risks and benefits associated with proposed ideas to strengthen Idaho school safety emerging in the Legislature and among interested parties:**

<b><i>Require individuals local trustees authorize to carry weapons on campus to undergo specific training for an enhanced permit</i></b>	
<b>Risks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aftermath- potential lifelong trauma associated with taking of life</li> <li>• Friendly fire- increased risk of injury / fatality due to multiple weapons in play during crisis situation</li> <li>• Ongoing training is required to maintain proficiency with a weapon in a crisis situation</li> <li>• Entity responsible for training? (N.R.A, POST Academy, etc...)</li> <li>• Parental Right to know who is carrying is not addressed</li> <li>• Lack of clarity regarding liability for personal injury and property damage resulting in firearm use of those authorized</li> <li>• Potential increase in school personnel seen as targets by perpetrators of school violence</li> <li>• Conflicts in loyalty may emerge regarding board expectations and personal conviction / administrator expectations / parental expectations / student expectations</li> </ul>	<b>Benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased ability to defend against a perpetrator until first responders arrive</li> <li>• Local control maintained (local trustees authorize)</li> <li>• Serves as a deterrent to potential perpetrators</li> <li>• Establishes uniformity of requirements for anyone carrying in Idaho schools</li> <li>• Serves as a force multiplier for first responders</li> </ul>

<b><i>Require schools to allow anyone with an enhanced concealed weapons permit to carry on campus- no requirement to alert school administration</i></b>	
<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completely changes current operating assumptions- most existing policy, practice and training would be greatly disrupted and / or irrelevant</li> <li>• First responder confusion regarding identification of threat would greatly increase</li> <li>• School / district administrators would be unaware of which staff members are armed</li> <li>• Loss of local control- state mandate</li> <li>• Infers state is liable for personal injury and damage to property</li> <li>• No way to determine mental health status of those carrying weapons on campus</li> <li>• Challenges regarding where the weapon is housed (on person? In desk?) and security of weapon</li> <li>• Weapon retention (preventing the obtainment of weapon by a student or perpetrator) is difficult to assure in a school setting</li> </ul>	<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hardens schools as a target- increases risk for perpetrators</li> <li>• Establishes perception of increased safety</li> <li>• Provides defense mechanism until first responders arrive</li> </ul>

<b><i>Enhanced perimeter reinforcement (locked fences, bullet-proof windows, buzz in front door for all visitors, metal detectors, etc...)</i></b>	
<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subjective assessment of school needs may result in non-essential use of limited resources</li> <li>• Unfunded mandate for schools</li> <li>• Not sufficiently confidential- public awareness of reinforcements may aid perpetrator tactics</li> <li>• Jurisdictional issues- who is responsible for maintenance and operations of security maintenance</li> <li>• Myopic approach to the issue- perception of increased safety- prisons have multiple reinforcements and are not safe</li> <li>• Schools have limited capacity (technical knowledge) to manage and provide oversight</li> </ul>	<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings visual attention to school safety</li> <li>• Forces a discussion on how to best secure schools</li> <li>• Serves as a deterrence to perpetrators- delays infiltration</li> </ul>

***Assign a School Resource Officer (SRO) to every school***

**Risks**

- Personality, demeanor and attitude make an effective SRO- difficult to identify and train
- SROs are typically not present the entire time school is in session- other priorities may divert attention
- Presents a false sense of security for the school community
- Turn-over is high among SROs
- Lack of qualified individuals to serve every school in Idaho
- Cost prohibitive

**Benefits**

- Provides increased continuity in communication between schools and law enforcement- formal and informal relationships increase prevention / response effectiveness
- Streamlined internal investigations
- Imbedded law enforcement perspective in schools strengthens planning and response efforts
- Increases attention around delinquency prevention (establishes positive relationships between students and law enforcement)
- Ownership
- Flexibility in SRO assignments diminishes cost barriers- one SRO assigned to multiple schools
- Existing training and infrastructure of law enforcement could be leveraged for schools

***Install gun safes for rifles in school buildings for authorized SRO access***

**Risks**

- Difficult to access weapon in emergency (requires SRO to be in location of safe to quickly retrieve weapon)
- Perception of increased safety
- Weapon retention

**Benefits**

- Better tool than a pistol to neutralize threats from long distance
- Gun safes are difficult to breach, best way to secure high powered weapons
- Deterrent to potential perpetrators

***Denial of school enrollment for juveniles with felonies or incarceration (1 year) on their record***

**Risks**

- Constitutionality of enrollment prohibition questionable
- Potential of non-reporting of crimes due to implication of no access to education may occur
- Lifelong consequence of ostracizing students- long term involvement in criminal justice system likely
- Limits local control in addressing unique needs of youth at risk

**Benefits**

- Perception of increased safety

Low hanging fruit- effective practices to scale up / connections to be made:

- Identify and disseminate effective prevention practices- identifying, reporting and providing interventions for students demonstrating risk behaviors (Positive Intervention Behavior Supports)
- Post room numbers on school exterior for ease of first responder identification
- Provide first responders maps of school building layout
- Incorporate a multi-hazard approach to existing drills and planning
- Establish and enforce visitation policies- access control

Next steps / action items:

- Determine next meeting date via e-survey
- Identify mental health representative for Stakeholder Group (Ross Edmonds / H&W)
- Brief PTA and IEA on Stakeholder progress and direction
- Incorporate Idaho Chiefs of Police Association's subcommittee on school safety in Stakeholder progress and direction
- Research THYRA and ALICE training model
- Identify ISP representative for Stakeholder Group
- Steve Steiner (Bureau of Homeland Security) present the following at next meeting:
  1. Existing communication network managed by BHS and the requirements to connect schools to this network
  2. Requirements to map school safety readiness via GIS technology and related grant opportunities
- Steve Keys (Division of Building Safety) present on Existing School Inspection Program and DBS capacity to incorporate school safety in existing activity
- Scott Johnson (Idaho Sheriff's Association / Ada County Sheriff) present leveraging Ada County Grant request to benefit school safety statewide

Closing comments – participant remarks regarding which single measure would be most effective:

- Train staff and students to run / hide / fight (Alice model) in the event of an armed intruder
- Install interior locks in every classroom
- State offers grants for districts to address their locally identified security needs
- Establish an entity solely responsible for school safety (Idaho Center for School Safety) X5
- Institutionalize a uniform planning process (NIMS / ICS compliant and reflected in THYRA)
- Revise Idaho statutes & board rules to address redundancies / deficiencies
- Provide training and materials to trustees
- Establish community groups / providers to better meet the needs of mentally ill
- Increase funding for SROs
- Establish 2 secure facilities for mental health-one for adults and one for juveniles
- Administer a uniform, thorough safety assessment in every school
- Place an SRO in every school
- Every district has an executive level FTE dedicated to overseeing school safety

Our group was empaneled in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting to review and consider recommendations for Idaho School as regards improving school safety and security in the state. It seems to me that we are operating on two very distinct levels with different basic questions. One question, what can be done now and implemented to improve school security now. The other, going forward what is the long term sustainable solution to improve school safety and security in all schools and districts in the state.

I believe that our committee has come to a number of determinations as a result of our work.

- First; that school security is a subset of the much wider subject of school safety.
- Second; that ownership and responsibility for school safety and security both at the state and local district level is generally nebulous and not well defined.
- Third; the availability of Idaho specific best practices information, training and assistance is severely limited, at best.
- Fourth; there is a wide variance in the level of attention and preparation for school safety and security issues in the school districts and charter schools across the state.
- Fifth; valid and reliable information on the current status of school safety and security in schools across the state does not exist.
- Sixth; School districts must work more closely with their first responder community in the planning process to maximize the effectiveness of any response.
- Seventh; ultimately any change must be driven by and under the direction of the local board and school district.
- Last; for most districts in the state the lack of resources including expertise, manpower, and finances is a major roadblock in making any meaningful and sustainable school safety and security improvement.

As we move forward there seem to be several areas of general consensus.

One area of consensus seems to be the need for a common threat assessment and safety audit tool that accurately and equitably measures the level of school safety and security at each school in the state. The tool needs to be valid, reliable and with proven inter-rater reliability. Self-assessment alone appears to be insufficient to the task.

Another area of general agreement seems to be the need for a common repository of best practices information and somewhere to go for both training and technical assistance. This is the Idaho School Safety Center modeled on the Texas center idea. This will provide both leadership and ownership of school safety and security at the state level.

The last area of consensus seems to be that an accountability function for a minimum level of acceptable school safety and security with an incentive component would be a viable way forward to improve the safety and security posture across the state.